

The Parable of the Sower

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Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church

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Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Today's Gospel reading comes to us at a time when Jesus was fulfilling His mission and sharing the Kingdom of God with those who had gathered along the banks of the Sea of Galilee in order to hear Him. Some had already heard Him speak, yet as children of Israel, they felt somehow entitled, and weren't open to hearing what He had to say. Still, many were curious as to what He would say next, so many, that He had to get into a boat near the shore, so that all could hear what we've all come to know as the Parable of the Sower.

The Lord knows that when His Word goes out, that some of it falls on those who hear but do not understand it. And like the birds in the parable who come and devour the seeds, the evil one snatches the Word of God that is shared. Some seeds fall on people who connect emotionally for a time. But when trials come, and the emotional connection has not taken root, they no longer feel the same way and aren't connected to the Word anymore. Other times, the Word of God falls on people who hear it, but because they are too caught up, with the desires, cares, and distractions of our world, it's choked out and the Word is unable to bear much fruit.

The Word of God also falls on those, who gladly hear and understand it. This is the seed that falls in good soil. People who are ready to hear the Word of God. They receive the Word of God and apply it, so that it might be abundantly fruitful in their lives. This is what yields a large harvest of 100, 60, and 30 times. This is what God wants to see in our lives.

You know, some of us have heard His Word preached, spoken, and read to us for years, and yet something has prevented it from becoming fruitful in our lives... So, have we allowed His Word to have Dominion over our lives or have we become more like the children of Israel who felt somehow entitled? While we have a tendency to blame others, if we are truly honest with ourselves, there have been times in our lives, when we've heard the Word of God and reacted like each of the scenarios in our parable.

And yet, no matter how we or others may or may not receive His Word, our Lord continues in His mission of sharing the Kingdom of God. Thanks be to God that He simply was not deterred. He continued to make His way to the cross where He would be rejected, despised, and even forsaken by His Father in Heaven, as He took the sins of the whole world upon Himself. It was there on the Cross that He willingly died for us, and on the third day, rose again, so that – as St. Paul shares in 1 Corinthians 15 v.20 “...***[he would be] the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.***”

It's by grace through faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that we're part of His Kingdom. We enter into His Kingdom through baptism, where His Spirit tills our hearts

and prepares them for the good seeds to be sown, enabling us to grow spiritually strong and healthy. His Spirit continues to help us listen, understand, and encourages us, to apply His Word to our lives, spiritually nourishing it so that it might bear fruit for the Kingdom.

Based on our parable for today, here are some things you might want to consider:

1. Listen to the Word of God with openness. Prepare yourself to learn and grow in ways that might open up new ways of looking at things.
2. Listen to the Word of God with balanced emotion. Listen with excitement and enthusiasm, and a healthy sense of what is required in the real world so that what is being said might take root first, before wisely moving to action.
3. Listen to the Word of God with intention. Try to stay focused, centered, and attentive so that you can concentrate even when other thoughts, distractions, and chaos try to disrupt.

This way, at least for a time, you can be an open, sensitive, receptive, focused, and attentive listener of what God has to say to you. And as this happens more and more, you'll feel more connected with Him, and your life will conform to His will. The life that He planned for you from the very beginning.

Together with other believers, we become His hands and feet in this world. It happens when we call and help those who are feeling especially distant and alone at this time during the pandemic. It happens when we remind others

through His Word that they're truly loved by God, and that His Kingdom is not only alive, but is far greater than anything that might happen in this world....And when this happens at Our Savior's Way, we fulfill our mission which is to Glorify God and Make Disciples for Jesus by: Forming Relationships, Experiencing Jesus Together, and Sharing God's Love.

In Jesus' name.

Amen.